

North Carolina Aquaculture Association



"Farming Fresh Alternatives"

April. 1, 2008

<http://www.ncagr.com/markets/aquaculture/NCAA.html>

Volume 1, Issue 2

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Special points of interest:

- Letter from the President
- 2008 Conference and Board Meeting
- 2007 Drought and Crawfish Production
- Hybrid Striped Bass Update
- Membership Application and New Member Survey

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I would like to thank you for electing me president of our association for the next 2 years. I feel over the next few years the NC Aquaculture Industry will be facing some very serious issues.

The first and foremost of these issues is water. More specifically water usage and discharge. Over the last year NC has experienced one of the worst droughts on record. Everyone's water usage will be under increased scrutiny. Although agriculture water use is estimated at 8-10% of the total water usage in NC, it is perceived to be a lot more. And as the old adage goes, "Perception is reality." While aquaculture is a non-consumptive user of water, it may be perceived we use more water than traditional aquaculture. All of NC is facing increase water use restrictions. This is likely to cause increased reporting of water that we pump out of the ground on our farms. This is likely to be implemented even on farms that are not in the Central Coastal Plain Capacity Use Area. What's all this mean to us? Well, we all need to be cognizant of our water usage on the farm. Keep good records of when water was pumped, and how much water was pumped. The more information you have on the water usage on your farm the better off you will be if aquaculture is targeted for water use restrictions.

Another important issue with water is the issue of discharge. At one point or another everyone in pond aquaculture in NC will have to drain a pond. While some species require more frequent draining than others, everyone has to discharge water at some point. Recently the NC Hybrid Striped Bass industry has been placed under increased scrutiny with regards to discharging water from their ponds. NCDWQ began to receive water quality complaints in 2003 that were attributed to hybrid striped bass pond drainage. Over the last few years water samples have been collected and analyzed. It has been determined that water quality was being impacted in several creeks in eastern NC. At the same time HSB farms took measures on the farms to reduce water usage. I can say that we at Castle Hayne Farms have decreased our water usage by 50%. Even with this water use reduction the NC HSB industry is not out of the woods just yet. We are facing the possibility of going to a zero discharge production system. It is currently unknown how this will affect our industry. You may be thinking, "Well, I don't raise hybrid striped bass, so I'm OK." I urge you not to fall into a false sense of security. Be mindful of the discharge you do have. Find out the classifications of the streams you discharge into. Make sure the water you discharge meets or exceeds the water quality standards for your area. All it takes is one complaint.

In closing, I would once again like to thank you for being elected president of the NC Aquaculture Association. I feel we have a challenging time ahead of us, I will need all of your help if we are to make this association what it can be and continue the success and growth of the NC Aquaculture Industry as a whole.

Sincerely,

President

2008 NC Aquaculture Development Conf. and Board Meeting

The 2008 NC Aquaculture Development Conference was a success. Once again the Aquafood Festival was the highlight of the event. Several NC Aquaculture Association members provided exquisite seafood for the evening festival. In addition to the Aquafood festival, the conference presented one of the best slates of speakers in recent years. Ron Hardy gave a humorous and informative talk about sustainable aquaculture in the marketplace. During our annual meeting, elections took place. A list of the

officers and newly elected board are below. Tom Ellis also gave a presentation on the importance of continuing to support and play an active role in the NC Aquaculture Association. Plans are underway for the planning of the 2009 NC Aquaculture Development Conference. If you have ideas on topics you would like to see presented, please send them to Marc Turano, Mike Frinsko, Steve Gabel, Nancy Sugg, or Matt Parker.

Current Officers:

President: Nancy Sugg, Castle Hayne Fisheries
Vice-President: Sterling Davenport, Millpond Crawfish
Sec: Matt Parker, NCDA&CS
Treasurer: William Small, NCDA&CS

Current Board Members::

Nancy Sugg (4 Yr Term)
Sterling Davenport (4 Yr Term)
Matt Parker (4yr Term)
William Small (4yr Term)
George Sullivan (2yr Term)
Randy Gray (2yr Term)
Dale Pridgen (2yr Term)
Gene Wiseman (2yr Term)

Drought Affects Crawfish Production

Traditional crawfish culture methods require the draining of crawfish ponds in the early summer for several reasons. As the ponds are drained slowly, the crawfish burrow into the pond sides and bottom to the water table. The high humidity and cool temperatures found in the burrow allow the crawfish to survive the pond dewatering for the summer. The crawfish will generally migrate up and down within the burrow to follow the water level. If the water level gets too high in the burrow as when the pond is flooded, the crawfish will be flooded out of the burrow. If the water level drops to levels below

the bottom of the burrow, the crawfish must dig deeper to follow the moisture. Generally, summer rainfall is adequate to maintain the moisture levels in the soil for the crawfish. If water stands in a crawfish pond for more than about 48 hours, the crawfish will begin to be flooded out of its burrows. If this happens, the larger adult crawfish are very capable of re-burrowing as the water levels recede in the pond, as long as the water temperatures do not rise around 100°F. However, most of upcoming season's crop will be in the form of newly hatched baby crawfish,

which cannot successfully re-burrow to depths necessary for survival for the rest of the summer.

The drought condition of this past summer has presented many challenges for the crawfish producers. The water table in eastern North Carolina dropped by several feet. Many of the crawfish producers were unable to irrigate their ponds to maintain the soil moisture levels. Additionally, several producers rely on excavated canals around their ponds as a water source when flooding the ponds in the late fall. This

fall, many of these canals were nearly dry and have only recently recovered to levels adequate to flood the crawfish ponds, now over three months late. Some crawfish ponds have already been identified as having significantly reduced crawfish populations and others have crawfish that are much smaller than would be expected at this time of the year. We can only wait and see if the crawfish will be able to bounce back to make this a successful year for the producers.

—Steve Gabel

Aurora Farms Work To Improve Water Quality

Complaints regarding algae blooms in creeks near Aurora have brought together hybrid striped bass farmers and the NC Division of Water Quality (DWQ). This joint effort is focusing on maintaining aquacultural production and improving stream quality in waters that receive discharges from the farms. Since the 2004 complaints, researchers from NCSU have conducted dye studies on the creeks. The farmers have examined their use of water and discharge practices. Changes in

water management has already taken place on some of the farms.

At a meeting on February 21, Al Hodge, Regional Manager of DWQ clearly explained the need for implementing additional practices aimed at water quality protection on all hybrid striped bass farms. Following this meeting the DWQ has clarified the approach that will be followed.

This process includes an examination of farm discharges and receiving waters on a case by case basis, beginning with the Aurora area farms. Each of these farms will develop a farm plan within six months and

agree to operate under a Special Order by Consent. This cooperative process allows time for researchers to develop new water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) and allows the farms to continue to grow fish while implementing these practices. Initial development of a list of known management practices that improve water quality is being compiled by Steve Gabel. Dr. Harry Daniels is providing DWQ with a projection of research needs, which should be investigated during this process. These studies may include a variety of actions ranging from water recycling/

reuse, to the establishment of settling basins and filtration, to improved management of water discharges. Matt Parker and Debra Sloan of NCDA&CS will work with the development of farm plans and economic evaluation of alternative production practices. According to Nancy Sugg, President of NCAA and an Aurora based Hybrid Striped Bass Farmer; "To be successful in this effort we must achieve the dual goal of maintaining farm profitability, while meeting the needs of the environment. We are confident that we can achieve this on our farms and learn a lot to help others in the industry."

—Tom Ellis

NCAA Voting Membership Categories

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Active: Active members will be any individual, partnership or corporation engaged in aquacultural production. This is identified by the fact they are licensed or permitted by the N C Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to commercially operate in the production of aquatic animals or plants or who hold a shellfish lease or other permission to commercially produce marine or estuarine fish, shellfish or crustacean in North Carolina, by the Division of Marine Fisheries. Membership in this category is limited to those who derive a portion of their income directly from aquaculture.

Support Industry: Support Industry membership shall include individuals or

representatives of companies or corporations that provide logistic, material or technical support to some portion of the aquaculture industry. Members may include entities including but not be limited to the sale of feed, aerators, nets, processing equipment, pharmaceuticals, pumps, line, wire, bags and other materials and equipment or consultants. This includes those individuals and companies permitted or licensed by the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer services to operate commercial fee fishing facilities or to transport fish into the state or otherwise possess aquatic animals.

Government/University: University, College and Community College, State Agency and Federal Agency representatives are in-

cluded in this category. Membership is required at the program or divisional level.

Honorary: Membership in this category is reserved for individuals who have provided outstanding service to the industries of aquaculture in North Carolina. This designation is established by majority vote of the Board of Directors. It should be limited primarily to retired individuals or those individuals who are no longer directly involved in the production of aquatic animals or whose duties have changed significantly relative to their previous responsibilities. It may also be offered to individuals in related fields who have provided outstanding service to aquaculture in North Carolina.

NCAA Non-Voting Categories

Student: Student members will be individuals attending an accredited university, Community College or public/private High School, who is interested in aquaculture in North Carolina.

Associate: This shall include individuals who are interested in the development of aquaculture in North Carolina. This may be for profit or simply for personal interest.

New Member Survey

Please rank in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important

What do you see as the major issue facing the NC Aquaculture Industry in the coming years?

- ___ Water Quality Issues
- ___ Aquatic Animal Health
- ___ Marketing Your Products
- ___ Waste Disposal Issues
- ___ Other (Please specify):

How would you like to see the NC Aquaculture Association spend its revenues?

- ___ Scholarships
- ___ Legislative Issues
- ___ Educational Outreach
- ___ Technical Training For Members
- ___ Other (Please specify):

Would you be interested in serving in a leadership role of the organization? (please check one)

- ___ Yes, as an officer
- ___ Yes, as a board member
- ___ Yes, on a committee if needed
- ___ Not at this time

Please provide any additional comments in the space below:

Membership Form

Categories	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Active Membership	\$ 50
<input type="checkbox"/> Support Industry	\$ 250
<input type="checkbox"/> Government/University	\$ 250
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$ 10
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate	\$ 25

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Make Checks Payable and return to:
North Carolina Aquaculture Association

c/o NC Dept. Agriculture and Consumer Services
P.O. Box 2066

*Join in order to
continue receiving this
newsletter*

Announcements

Announcements:
If you have any personal announcements, you would like to send out please send them to Matt Parker for the next newsletter. These could include births, deaths, or special events at your farms.

Deaths
Tom Hollowell
February 25, 2008

Levi Lilly-Early March
2008

NC Crawfish Grower's
Promotional Boils

Lumberton State
Farmer's Market- May
24

Raleigh State Farmer's
Market – June 7

Piedmont Triad
Farmer's Market- June
21

Pitt County Coopera-
tive Extension Center
– June 28 (tentative
depending on supply)

If you would like to
continue receiving this
newsletter please join
YOUR NC Aquacul-
ture Association!

Otherwise this will be
the last one you re-
ceive.



c/o NC Dept. Agriculture and
Consumer Services

P.O. Box 2066

Elizabeth City, NC 27709

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